

Partnering with an Urban Community Farm to Develop an Affordable CSA Program



Presentation Overview



- IERCD's agriculture and outreach challenges
- History and mission of Huerta Del Valle
- Overview of CSA Program Implementation
 - CSA Program Development & Logistics
 - CSA Program Successes & Challenges
 - Community Engagement
- Other resulting outcomes of partnership
 - Land acquisition and urban farm development

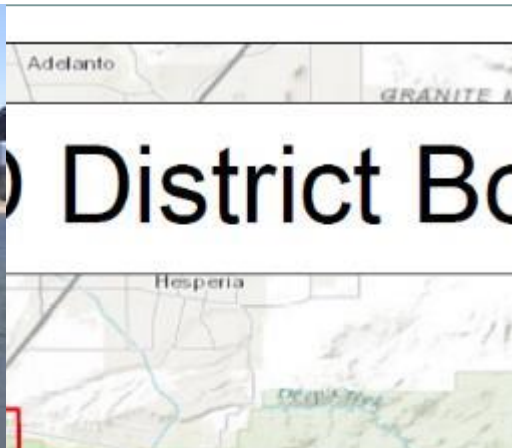


Inland Empire RCD



- Serves 1,300 square miles of San Bernardino and Riverside counties
- Primarily urbanized, but historically a prominent agricultural region
- RCD Program focus areas:
 - Mitigation and habitat restoration
 - K-12 education
 - NRCS program support
 - Urban Agriculture
 - Forestry and Fire Prevention





Huerta del Valle Urban Community Farm



Huerta del Valle



- Huerta del Valle began in 2015 through a partnership with the City of Ontario, Pitzer College, and the local community
- Today it hosts 60 individual family plots and 2.5 acres of intensive production sold at their weekly market and through the CSA program
- While sustainable food production is a main part of their mission, their work also focuses on community building and equity.





2017-2018 NACD UAC Grant

- **Urban Agriculture Conservation Initiative**
 - Aimed at supporting urban agriculture projects, specifically focused on underserved/food desert regions
 - Available to Conservation Districts nationwide.

- **IERCD's UAC Grant Goals**
 - Development of a “low income” CSA program
 - Organization of community nutrition workshops
 - Development of farmer workshops



What is a CSA?

- **Community Supported Agriculture**

- Community Supported Agriculture is a food production system that directly connects consumers with their farmers. Typically, members purchase a “share” of the farm at the beginning of the season and are provided weekly boxes of produce, depending on what is seasonally available. This way farmers receive early-season capital to invest into the farm and customers are provided fresh, organic produce throughout the season

- **Benefits:**

- Weekly, in season produce
- Introduction to new fruits and vegetables
- Opportunities to visit the farm and participate in events
- Support for your local agricultural industry



CSA Development



- Hired a full-time CSA Manager
- The program was first advertised to local residents and families engaged with the garden (serving over 20 families)
- Refined growing season to reflect CSA needs
- Worked with local farmers to participate in CSA



CSA Logistics



- 1 full time CSA Coordinator to harvest, prepare boxes, advertise the program, and deliver produce
- Price breakdown
 - Full Price: \$25 a box for 7-10 vegetables
 - Affordable Price: \$10 a box for 7-10 vegetables
- Members could pay week by week, but were asked to “commit” to at least 6 weeks throughout the season.
- New communities were targeted to purchase full price boxes to subsidize low-income boxes

CSA Outreach

HUERTA DEL VALLE CSA

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

We are a community garden non-profit where all of our produce is grown using sustainable and organic practices. When you join our CSA, not only are you getting the highest quality produce, but you are also supporting the community and local farmers throughout the Inland Empire.

The CSA is currently available every other Tuesday and will contain 7-10 items consisting of fruits, vegetables, and herbs. A standard share is \$25 + delivery

For more information about the CSA contact:
Lucía Ceja at (310) 748-4011 or
lsolorzano@iercd.org
Pickup will be at the IERCD office:
25864 Business Center Drive Ste. K
Redlands, CA 92507

www.huertadelvalle.org

Nutritional Facts and Recipes Included

EGGPLANT SPAGHETTI

Ingredientes:

- 2 medium eggplants, cubed
- 1/2 minced onion
- 250ml marinara sauce
- 1 cup of parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 300g of spaghetti
- 1 bunch of basil and 1 bunch of cilantro (optional)
- 1 tsp salt, and black pepper to taste

Instructions:

- 1- Cook the spaghetti according to the package and add the chicken cube to the water.
- 2- Add the oil to a pan and cook the onion, garlic, and the eggplant for about 3 min.
- 3- Then add the marinara sauce and pepper to taste. Cook on low heat for about 15 min.
- 4- When you turn it off add the basil.
- 5- Serve and sprinkle the parmesan cheese.

Enjoy!!!



ESPAQUETI CON SALSA DE TOMATE Y BERENJENAS

Ingredientes:

- 2 berenjenas medianas cortadas en pequeños cuadrados
- 1/2 cebolla picada
- 250ml de salsa marinara
- 1 Taz de queso parmesano
- Albahaca fresca
- 300gr de espagueti
- 1 diente de ajo y un cuadro de consomé de pollo
- Aceite de oliva, sal y pimienta al gusto

Instrucciones:

- 1- Cocina el espagueti según las instrucciones del paquete y añade el consomé de pollo a el agua, escurre el espagueti guardando un poco de agua al lado.
- 2- Añade en un sartén el aceite de oliva y fríe la cebolla, el ajo y la berenjena.
- 3- Después añade la salsa marinara, sal y pimienta al gusto, deja hervir a fuego lento por unos 15 minutos (si es necesario agrega un poco de agua de la pasta).
- 4- Al final agrega el albahaca a la salsa.
- 5- Sirve y agrega el queso parmesano.

Que lo disfruten!!!



CSA Successes



- 40 families served with the CSA Program
- Introduction of new produce to families
- Over 200 community members provided nutrition education
- A (semi) consistent stream of income for HdV
- Opportunity to further refine program



CSA Challenges



- By not enforcing a contract, community members were not always consistent with purchasing their boxes weekly.
- CSA members who came to the farm to pick up boxes started to request switching out their produce
- While the pricing structure benefits community members greatly, it doesn't allow for much profit for Huerta del Valle and the IERCD



CSA Improvements in 2018-2019



- Developed formal contract for CSA members to understand what they are committing to (4 or 8 weeks) and put the burden of notifying the CSA coordinator onto the customer
- Began outreaching to more full cost CSA members to help subsidize the low income boxes.
- Connected with more farms to utilize produce for CSA program and support regional farms
- Closed CSA program Nov-Feb



Community Nutrition Workshops

- Engage the community with new opportunities to learn about nutrition
- Teach residents how to use the produce within the CSA
- Promote the missions of IERCD and HdV



Community Nutrition Workshops



- Engage with new community partners to bring continued resources to residents:
 - UCCE Master Gardeners
 - UCCE Master Food Preservers
 - Rialto HS Culinary Facility
 - Native American Health Network



Next Steps



- Expansion of CSA program and reevaluation of how to administer low-income CSA program
- Acquisition of new locations for urban agriculture
 - As of 2019, HdV now has three additional public properties (totaling over 40 acres) to continue farming and using for the CSA and other programs
 - IERCD has acquired a separate 40 acre property, along with partners including HdV and local water districts to develop an urban agriculture project as well as a nature center and recreation opportunities



Final Thoughts



- Conservation District's can play a major role in expanding and developing urban agriculture projects.
- In some areas, urban agriculture projects might be the main solution and opportunity to connect residents with agriculture
- CSA's are a great way for community members to interact with their farmer and support urban agriculture projects through a dependable market



Thank You!!



What Questions Do You Have?

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